A Three-Tier Model for Intertextuality in the Holy Qurān

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Abstract

In previous literature, intertextuality has been applied to the interpretation of the Holy Qurān, but it lacks a coherent and systematic approach. So far, little or no attempt has been made to propose or design a systematic model of intertextuality for the interpretation of the Holy Qurān. This paper reviews both the modern Western and Islamic theoretical literature on intertextuality. Besides, it exhaustively reviews the intertextual approaches to the interpretation of the Holy Qurān both in classical exegetical tradition and in modern research studies. The findings reveal that the existing approaches are either sketchy and sporadic, or generic or rigid, and cannot account for a comprehensive interpretation of the Holy Qurān. They do not suggest any systematic model for search and selection of intertextual links in the Holy Qurān. The review also shows that the modern theoretical literature on intertextuality in Western tradition misses the theoretical literature on the tool of intertextuality in Islamic discourse. On the basis of its findings, this paper, keeping in view the sensitivity of the religious discourse, suggests a 3-tier model of intertextuality for interpretation of the Holy Qurān, consisting of lexical, topical and grammatical/stylistic intertextual links. This paper also suggests that future research may focus on its application to Qurānic interpretation or/and to frame more vibrant models of intertextuality, drawing on the modern trends in linguistics, to serve the aim of comprehensive interpretation of the Holy Qurān.

Key Words: Qurān, context, intertextuality, intertextual links, interpretation.

Introduction

Intertextual approach has been applied to the interpretation of the Qurān in previous literature, but no well-designed intertextual model has been so far suggested. This paper will review the current literature on intertextuality in the Qurānic studies and in the western tradition. The available literature reveals that previously intertextuality has often been applied to the interpretation of the

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